

## Westwood & Highland Park Neighborhood Plan

### LAND USE, HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

#### INTRODUCTION

This section of the Plan addresses the growth capacity of the urban village and the entire Westwood & Highland Park Planning Area. The community heart was designated a residential urban village in the Comprehensive Plan. As such, there are no specific employment growth targets in terms of jobs, but the Plan does address strategies aimed at strengthening the community business areas, and is intended to have the effect of increasing this component of growth as well. Following the discussion of residential land use and housing goals, policies and strategies, this section of the Plan contains specific planning recommendations for community development within the neighborhood business district areas.

#### LAND USE GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal A community that reflects the unique local character of the Westwood and Highland Park neighborhoods, with community anchors, a safe and pleasant pedestrian environment, and a positive aesthetic appearance.

Policy Encourage physical gateway improvements at key entry points and business districts that identify Seattle's Westwood and Highland Park neighborhoods,

Policy Seek to create as-of place along major streets that visually and functionally promotes the rights of pedestrians.

Policy Promote a sense of community identity and pride.



#### HOUSING GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal A community with both single-family and multi-family residential areas and the amenities to support diverse population.

Policy Seek to maintain the character and integrity of the existing Single Family areas

Policy Encourage new housing development that serves a range of income-levels.

Policy Promote the attractiveness of higher density residential areas through the enhancement of basic infrastructure and amenities.

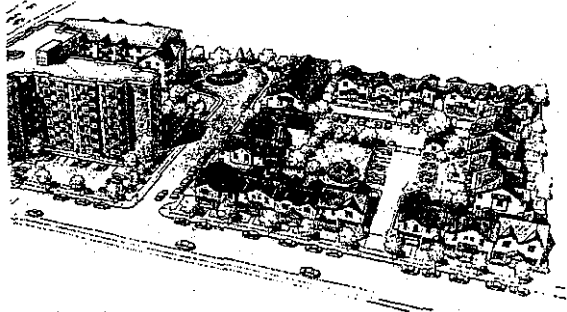
Policy Seek the development of quality townhouse, cottage houses, and accessory dwelling units in existing single-family zoned areas through design review.

Policy Promote mixed-use projects featuring quality housing opportunities within the Triangle Commercial Core.

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**Policy** Seek to ensure safe and well-maintained housing.

**Policy** Support the Seattle Housing Authority and non-profits in the development of high quality housing that serves the low-income.



**Policy** Encourage new residential development and opportunities through zoning tools such as Residential Small Lot Development, and incentives in multi-family zones and commercial zones.

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND POLICIES**

**Goal** A vibrant center of shopping that serves and attracts local residents within both communities.

**Policy** Seek to revitalize the Triangle Commercial Core (16th Avenue SW Business District and Westwood Town Center) through pedestrian amenities, parking management, transit enhancements to create an anchor business district that attracts and serves local residents.

**Policy** Encourage programs that promote the local business community through collaborative marketing activities and neighborhood celebration events.

### **HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY GOALS & POLICIES**

**Goal** A neighborhood that recognizes and supports the diverse human development needs and safety concerns of its changing and diverse population.

**Policy** Seek to improve communication between people, organizations, and communities dealing with human development and safety issues.

**Policy** Promote the use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques in the development of parks, open spaces, pedestrian/bike trails, and traffic improvements.

### **PLANNING POPULATION TARGETS AND THE URBAN VILLAGE**

The Westwood & Highland Park Planning Area consists of slightly more than 1,000 acres. Of this, the Urban Village comprises nearly 280 acres (27% of the total Planning Area). Outside of the Urban Village boundaries, the Planning Area is exclusively zoned single family, except for some small neighborhood commercial zoned areas along 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW, 35<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW and SW Holden St. Most of the area is developed.

#### **Urban Village**

The central part of the urban village is zoned single-family residential (SF 5000 and SF 7200). The remainder is a mix of low-rise multifamily residential (L1, L2, and L3) and Neighborhood Commercial except for the Westwood Town Center property which is zoned C1-40. The Seattle Housing Authority Roxbury Village property is zoned for mid-rise multifamily residential uses and contains the only tall building in the area. The Delridge Way SW "dog-leg"

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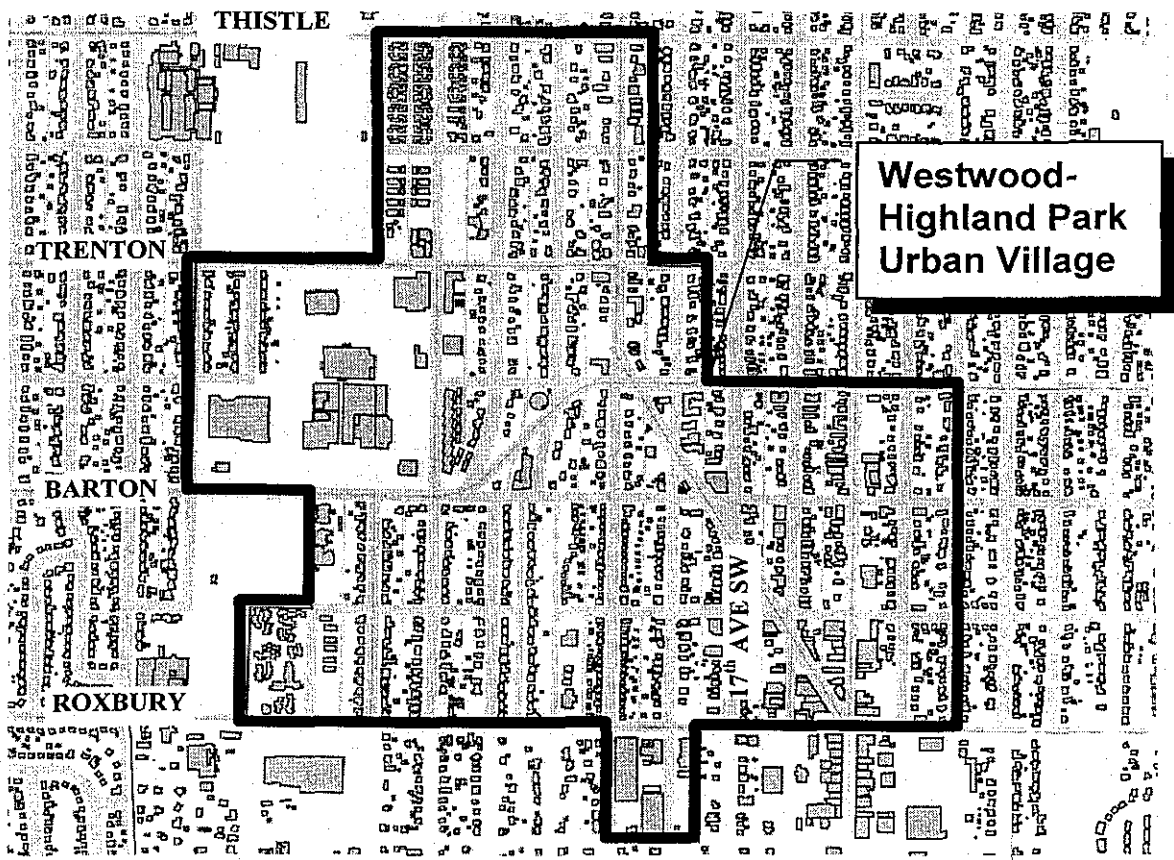
south to the city limits, at SW Roxbury St., is zoned for "neighborhood commercial uses which may include retail, offices, service businesses, and residential uses. There is a scattering of vacant parcels throughout the urban village, mostly in the low-rise multifamily residential zones. The number of households in the Urban Village in 1990 was 1,292 with a density of 4.7 households per acre. This number of households has increased somewhat since 1990 as more of the available land has been developed.

### Development Capacity and Growth Target

The Comprehensive Plan established a growth target for the Urban Village of 700 additional households by the year 2014. Since it is a residential Urban Village, there is no target specified for non-residential uses. Urban Center Villages and Hub Urban Villages also have employment targets expressed in terms of jobs per acre.

**While** Westwood & Highland Park does not have this requirement, it should be acknowledged that the commercial areas within the Urban Village do generate significant employment. In addition, the institutions present in the Urban Village also provide for employment that is an important economic benefit to the community.

The additional residential development called for in the Comprehensive Plan would raise the urban village density to 8.5 households per acre. This is based on the theoretical build-out zoned capacity of an additional 1,100 units. Since most of the area is developed, and the remaining undeveloped land is largely individual parcels, the targeted growth is expected to be met through re-development and k-dill. The zoning districts provide for densities as shown below.



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Table 8  
Zoning Density Factors

Zone	Site Area/Unit (Square Feet)	Density Units/Acre
SF 5000	<b>5,000</b>	<b>8</b>
SF 7200	7,200	6
Residential Small Lot (RSL)	2,500	17
Cottage Housing (RSL/C)	1,600	27
Duplex/Triplex (LDT)	<b>2,000</b>	<b>21</b>
Low Rise 1 (L 1)	1,600	27
L2	<b>1,200</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>L3</b>	<b>800</b>	54
Mid Rise (MR)	no limit	no limit
Neighborhood Commercial (NC)	800-1,600	27-54
Commercial ( C )	800-1,200	36-54

Thus, using these factors, development of 700 new units in residential small lot form would require about 40 acres. Under L3 zoning, the same number of units would require developing 13 acres.

According to the City Department of Construction and Land Use, 121 new units have been developed in the Urban Village between 1989 and 1997. Forty-six units were developed since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted (through 1997). In order to meet the target, about 650 units should be developed by 2014. This amounts to an average of 40 units per year. This is an aggressive pace in comparison to the rate of new housing construction in recent years.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

While the theoretical residential development capacity of the Urban Village is greater than the Comprehensive Plan target, meeting the growth target will rely on the responsiveness of the private housing development industry to market

conditions. Since few large sites exist, and since redevelopment and infill development are more expensive than development on vacant land; this responsiveness will be a function of **some or** all of the following factors:

- land costs;
- project development costs;
- market demand;
- housing sales prices or rental rates;
- capacity of the transportation system;
- neighborhood security and quality;
- community acceptance.

If land costs are competitive with other areas, and there is a strong demand for new housing in the area, then projects will be more feasible. If utilities and street infrastructure capacity and quality are adequate for additional density, then development cost will be lower. If the level of neighborhood amenities, and access to transit and services is good, then potential buyers and renters will be attracted to the area. And if the existing community residents are supportive of new development, then project permitting is likely to be faster and less expensive.



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This leads to the Westwood & Highland Park Plan recommended strategies for encouraging new housing development within the urban village.



Strategy 1: Designate some or all of the single family residential zoned area within the Urban Village for Residential Small Lot development. This would increase the theoretical capacity but could also have the effect of increasing the development feasibility in the area by enabling individual lots be redeveloped with two or more new small single family houses. An important element of this strategy would be to provide increased scrutiny of design quality to ensure that these new projects would not threaten the integrity of the neighborhood.

Strategy 2 Increase the development potential of the existing multifamily zoned areas. This strategy involves several options. Existing property owners and potential developers could be encouraged to focus investments in these areas by purchasing existing single family houses and redeveloping the sites for higher density units." In addition, some of the older multifamily building may be, nearing the end of their useful lives and therefore

subject to redevelopment. Finally, vacant properties in the multifamily zones could be brought to the attention of the development industry. While there is limited City capability to actively advocate these options, it is possible that some limited City resources along with community interests working with local real estate brokers could initiate a program for action.

Strategy 3: Encourage residential development in commercial areas. As with Strategy 2, the community could work with commercial property owners and realtors to promote new mixed-use development or single-purpose residential developments within the existing neighborhood commercial and commercial zones.



All three of these strategies bear future consideration depending upon the vigor of private developers to respond to market and economic conditions. Implementation of Strategies 2 and 3 are advisable as a means of initiating dialogue between owners, developers and neighbors. Institutional owners such as churches and non profit developers could be the first sponsors Of education programs which could bring City development and housing experts out to describe the development process and begin to address concerns of potential developers.

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More aggressive strategies like strategy number one, may be considered by the community if "the pace of residential development does not pick up.

Strategy 4: Enhance the quality of the Urban Village to increase its attractiveness to new residents. The most important strategy for government intervention in the market is to invest city funds wisely in street improvements, pedestrian amenities, transit service, parks and recreation facilities and **services**, and public safety. These investments will both improve the community for existing residents as well as send a signal to investors and future owners and tenants that the Westwood & Highland Park Urban Village is a good place to live.

### **Near-Term Recommendations**

Create design principles for enhancing the qualities of the Roxbury Village Development, and work with DCLU to implement departures from code beneficial to community.

Using CPTED principles, provide for design review of new buildings,... signage, lighting, parking, and landscaping at Westwood Town Center.

Work with the DCLU to shape neighborhood based design

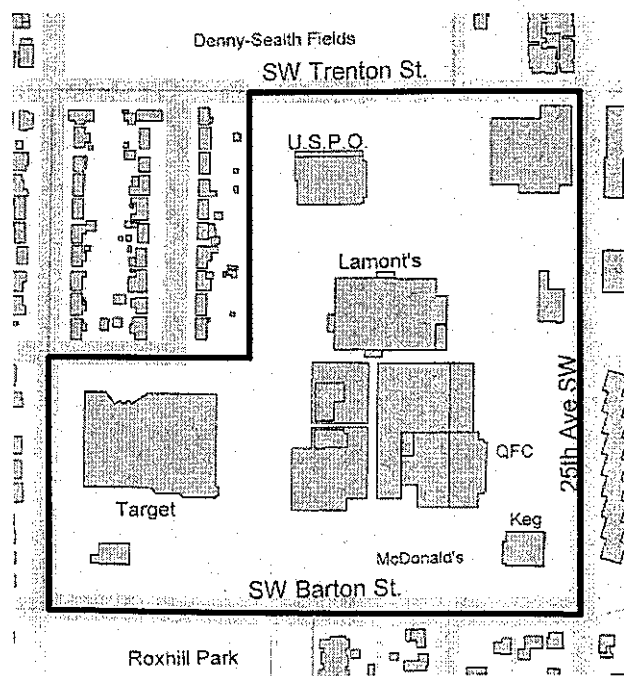
guidelines that will encourage sensitive infill development.

- . Develop design and density standards for MF and SF housing within Urban Village
- . Develop recommendations for retaining and improving residential housing stock in SF 5000 zones, particularly where parcels are 10,000 square feet,
- . Develop cottage housing options in the allowed zones (per code).

### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Two primary shopping areas are contained within the urban village - Westwood Town Center and the "Triangle Commercial District" (also known as "Delridge Downtown"). The Town Center consists of several large establishments (Laments, Target, and QFC) and a courtyard complex of smaller storefronts along with a free-standing McDonalds and the former Ernst Hardware Store now containing a

liquidation store. The U.S Postal Service operates a pOst Office On an adjoining parcel at the northern edge of the center property. The owners of the center are planning a major upgrade of the facility which will include physical redevelopment of the complex as well as new retailers. The



**WESTWOOD TOWN CENTER**

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former Ernst building is being considered as one alternative location for the new Southwest Police Precinct Station.

The Plan makes no specific recommendations for **SW ROXBURY** nges within the Center. The community hopes that the proposed revitalization will bring a more complete offering of goods and services to enhance the Center's retail role. Better pedestrian access into and circulation within the Center should be part of this. In addition, resolution of vehicular access and egress should be considered in conjunction with other related transportation recommendations in the Plan. Since the redevelopment of the property will be subject to City design review, the community hopes to participate early in helping the Center owner understand how the recommendations of this plan can assist in better integrating the Center with the surrounding area.

### Triangle Commercial Core

**The** Triangle Core (otherwise known as the 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue Business District or Downtown Delridge) lies at the southern edge of the Plarming Area at the city limits adjacent to the White Center shopping district. The relationship between the area on the "city side" is both supported and complicated by the larger concentration of shops and services on the "county

side". Many people identify the entire area as White Center. The businesses within the Triangle Core include small shops and restaurants as well as larger region-serving establishments including a wide range of product and service offerings. In addition, the Salvation Army owns and operates a large social service and recreation complex located within the Core. Three meetings were held with business owners to discuss issues and needs. These meetings resulted in the following strategies for a progressive program to enhance the area.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND POLICIES**

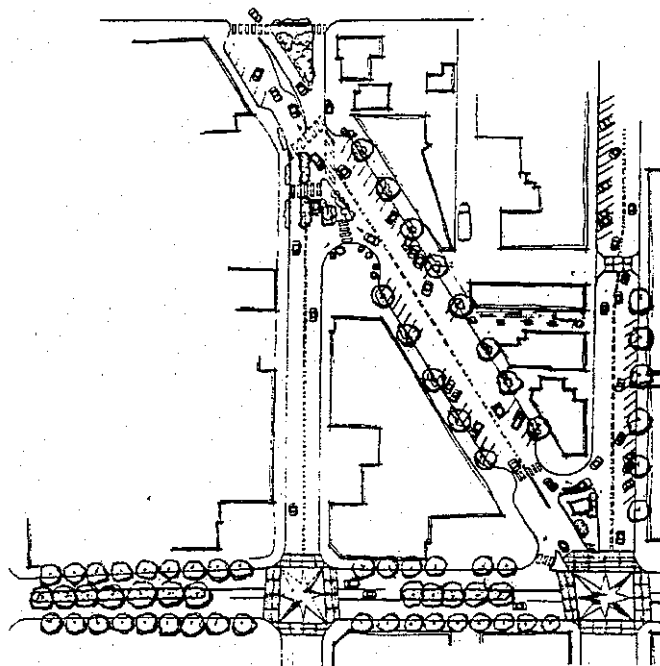
Goal *A vibrant center of shopping that serves and attracts local residents within both communities.*

Policy *Seek to revitalize the Triangle Commercial Core (16<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW Business District and Westwood Town*

*Center) through pedestrian amenities, parking management, transit enhancements to create an anchor business district that attracts and serves local residents.*

Policy *Encourage programs that promote the local business community through collaborative marketing activities and neighborhood celebration events.*

*In many ways, the Triangle Commercial*



**16<sup>th</sup> AVENUE BUSINESS DISTRICT**